Chapter 11

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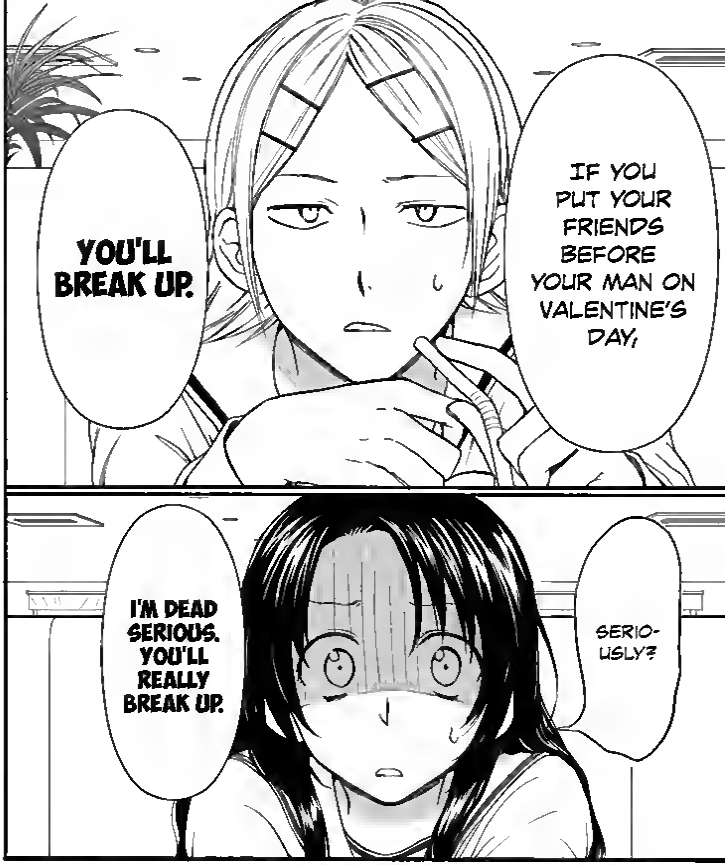
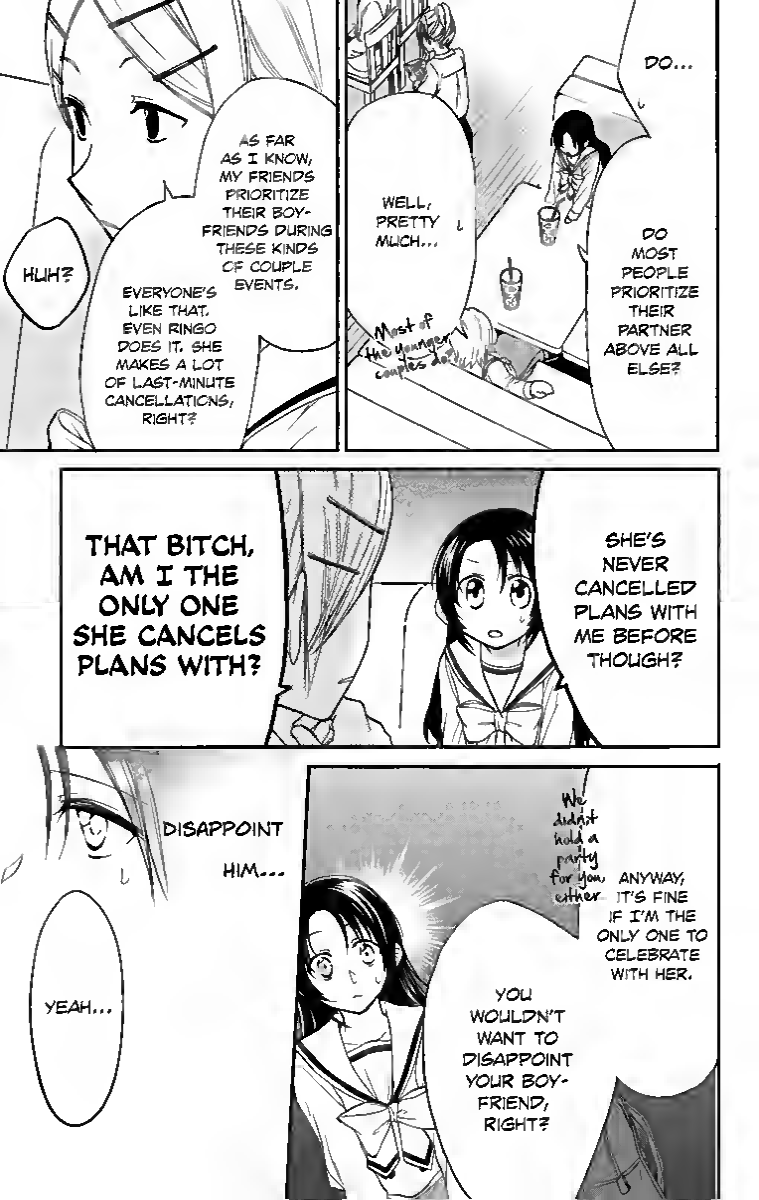

IF YOU PUT YOUR FRIENDS BEFORE YOUR MAN ON VALENTINE'S DAY,
YOU'LL BREAK UP.
SERIO-USLY?
I'M DEAD SERIOUS. YOU'LL REALLY BREAK UP.


DO...
DO MOST PEOPLE PRIORITIZE THEIR PARTNER ABOVE ALL ELSE?
WELL, PRETTY MUCH...
Most of the younger couples do!
AS FAR AS I KNOW, MY FRIENDS PRIORITIZE THEIR BOY-FRIENDS DURING THESE KINDS OF COUPLE EVENTS.
HUH?
EVERYONE'S LIKE THAT. EVEN RINGO DOES IT. SHE MAKES A LOT OF LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATIONS, RIGHT?
SHE'S NEVER CANCELLED PLANS WITH ME BEFORE THOUGH?
THAT BITCH, AM I THE ONLY ONE SHE CANCELS PLANS WITH?
We didn't hold a party for you, either
ANYWAY, IT'S FINE IF I'M THE ONLY ONE TO CELEBRATE WITH HER.
YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT YOUR BOY-FRIEND, RIGHT?
DISAPPOINT HIM...
YEAH...

I RESOLVED TO TREASURE HIM MORE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE...
WAS I ABOUT TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AND DISAPPOINT HIM AGAIN?
HA...
IT'S BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY NATURAL TO HONOR A PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT FIRST.

I SUPPOSE... THAT'S NOT HOW MOST PEOPLE THINK...

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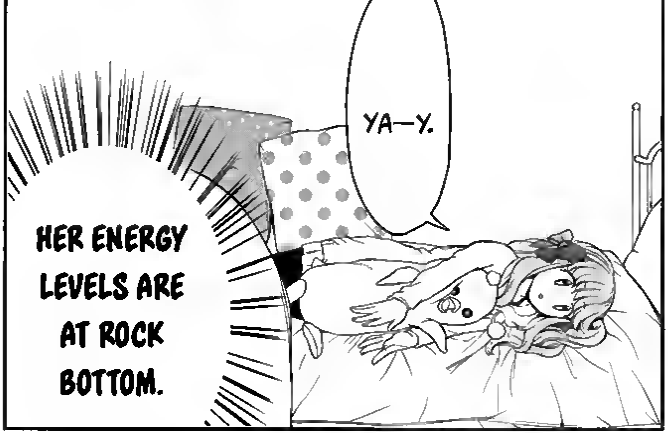
I FEEL LIKE SHE'S BEING A LITTLE DISTANT RECENTLY...
WOULDN'T RINGO-CHAN BE SAD, THEN?
BUT...
OR WOULD SHE BE FINE WITH IT?
OF COURSE, YOUR BOYFRIEND COMES FIRST. YOU HAVE TO ADAPT TO NEW SITUATIONS AS THEY ARISE.
Indifferent
IF SHE SAID THAT, THEN I WOULD BE OKAY WITH IT, TOO... HMM...
HEY.
WHY AM I BAKING A CAKE FOR A PARTY I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO?!
SIGH
OH, THIS IS FOR MY FRIEND'S BIRTH-DAY...
YOU LISTE-NING?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH A CAKE THAT BIG?

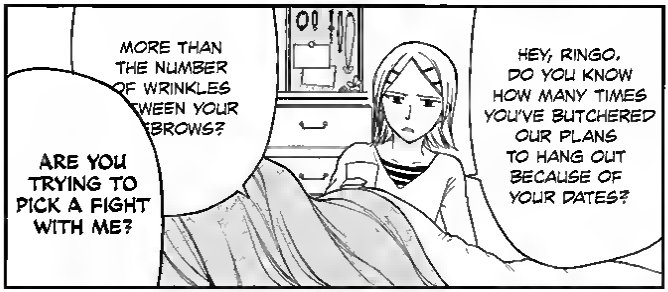
I FINISHED MAKING THE CHOCOLATE FOR NISHINO-SAN...
WE'VE MADE PLANS TO MEET AT MY HOUSE AFTER SCHOOL.
THE PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE...
YET...
ON THE 14TH
I STILL FEEL LIKE SOMETHING'S WEIGHING ON MY CHEST!
I HAVE A STRANGE, UNEASY FEELING THAT I CAN'T SHAKE OFF! CAN I REALLY DO THIS TO MY FRIEND?

What's wrong?
HMM? MAI-CHAN, YOU LOOK A LITTLE DOWN.
CHEER UP! IT'S VALENTINE'S DAY, AFTER ALL.
IF YOU'RE FEELING BLUE ON VALENTINE'S DAY, THAT MUST MEAN...
GASP
IT'S NOT THAT!
I'm sorry.
HMM... UM... AH...
I JUST WANT TO ASK...
Thank goodness.
PHEW.
YOU'RE NOT WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING LOVE-RELATED, RIGHT?
Um...
IF YOU HAD A PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT WITH A FRIEND AND A DATE WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND THAT CLASHED,
WHICH WOULD TAKE PRECEDENCE?

SMILE
MY BOY-FRIEND.♡
I THINK I SAW THEM LOOK AT ME WITH DISDAIN FOR A SECOND THERE.
SO EVERYONE DOES THINK THAT WAY...
...THEN...
WHAT ABOUT RINGO-CHAN?
HMM.
THERE'S NO POINT IN WORRYING! I HAVE TO LIFT MY SPIRITS!

MAI
LOOKED IN YOUR DIRECTION TODAY.
RINGO.
I KNOW.
SIGH...
ANYWAY,
HAPPY BIRTH-DAY—
Con-grats
LIFT


HER ENERGY LEVELS ARE AT ROCK BOTTOM.
YA—Y.


HEY, RINGO. DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY TIMES YOU'VE BUTCHERED OUR PLANS TO HANG OUT BECAUSE OF YOUR DATES?
MORE THAN THE NUMBER OF WRINKLES TWEEN YOUR EBROWS?
ARE YOU TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH ME?

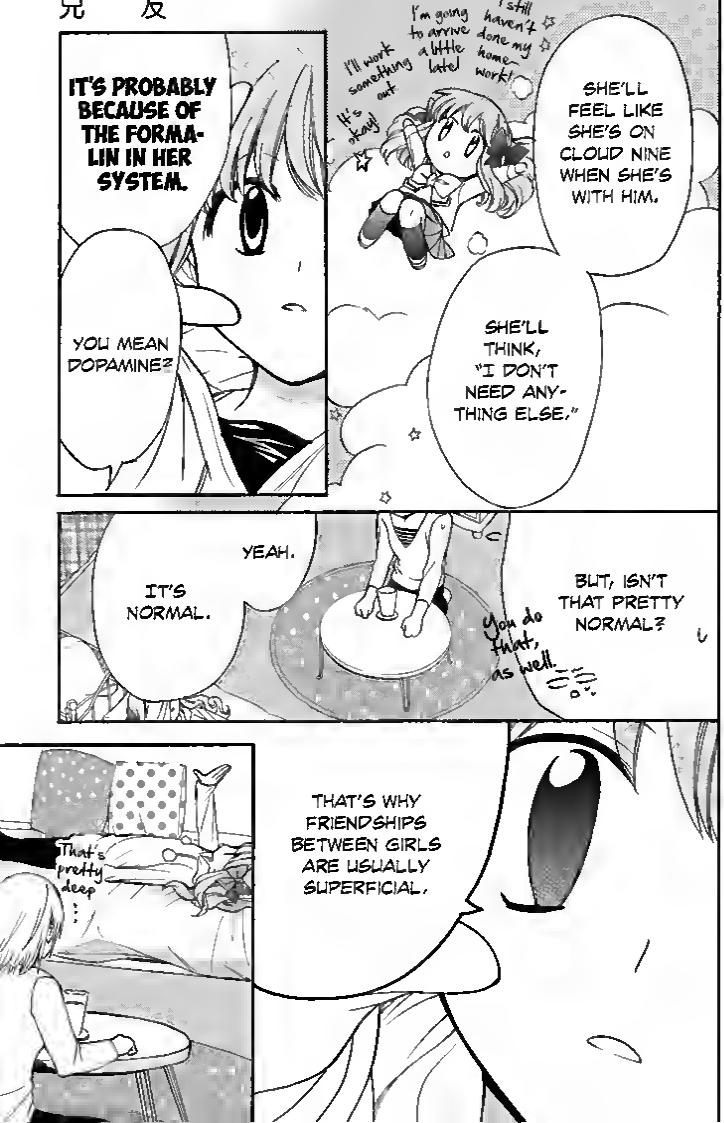
Anyway,
DON'T THINK TOO BADLY OF MAI.
I SYMPATHIZE WITH YOU, SINCE WE PROMISED TO HOLD A BIRTH-DAY PART FOR YOU LAST YEAR, BUT—
THAT'S NOT IT.

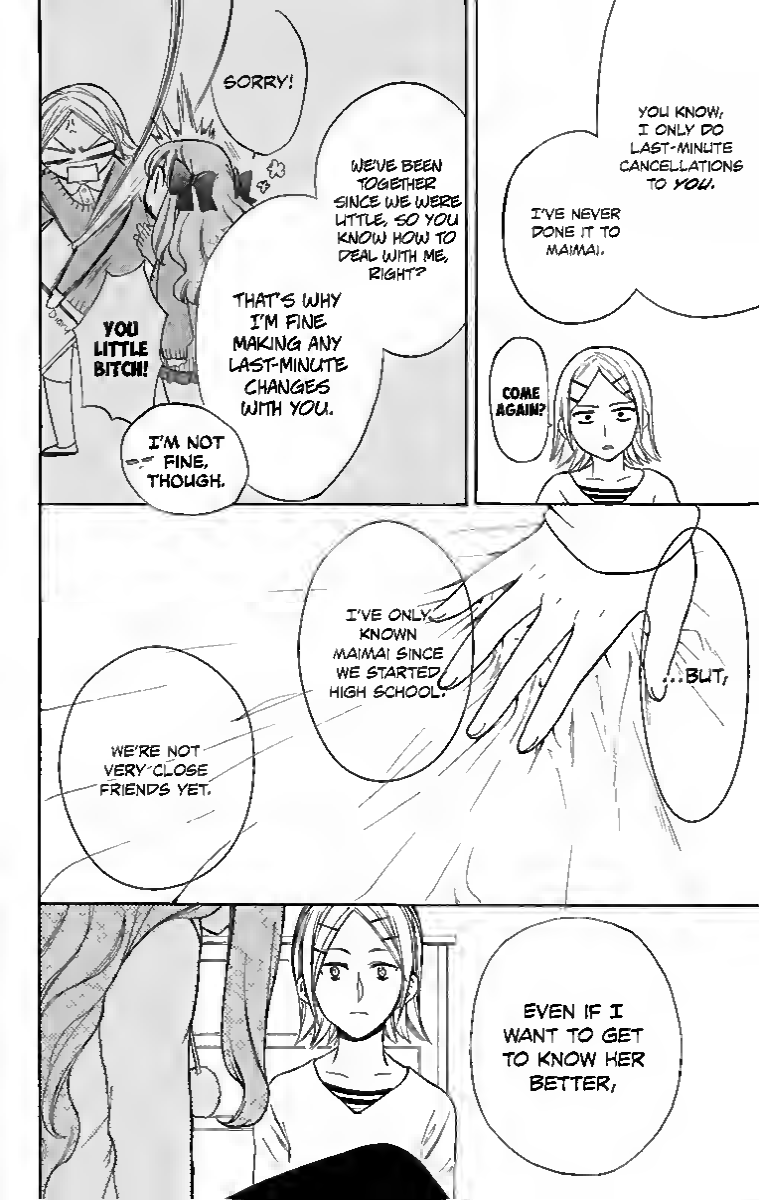
I'M NOT BOTHERED ABOUT HER MISSING MY BIRTHDAY PARTY.
I JUST
DON'T WANT MAIMAI TO—
BECOME A STRANGER.

I'M SO HAPPY I COULD DIE...
SHE'S WEARING A PONYTAIL...
AND AN APRON.
I HOPE IT'S TO YOUR TASTE...
HER PONYTAIL IS SO CUTE...
ONCE YOU'RE DONE, HELP ME FINISH EATING THESE.
I REALLY WANTED YOU TO GIVE ME A BREAK FROM ALL THAT TODAY, AT LEAST.
HMM?
HEY, MAI.

AH...
RIGHT...
EAT IT.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HER PARTY, RIGHT?
HUH?!
...?
I COULDN'T BRING SUCH A BIG CAKE TO SCHOOL,
SO I'LL HAVE TO EAT IT HERE...
BE-CAUSE I'M NOT...
GOING TO HER BIRTH-DAY...

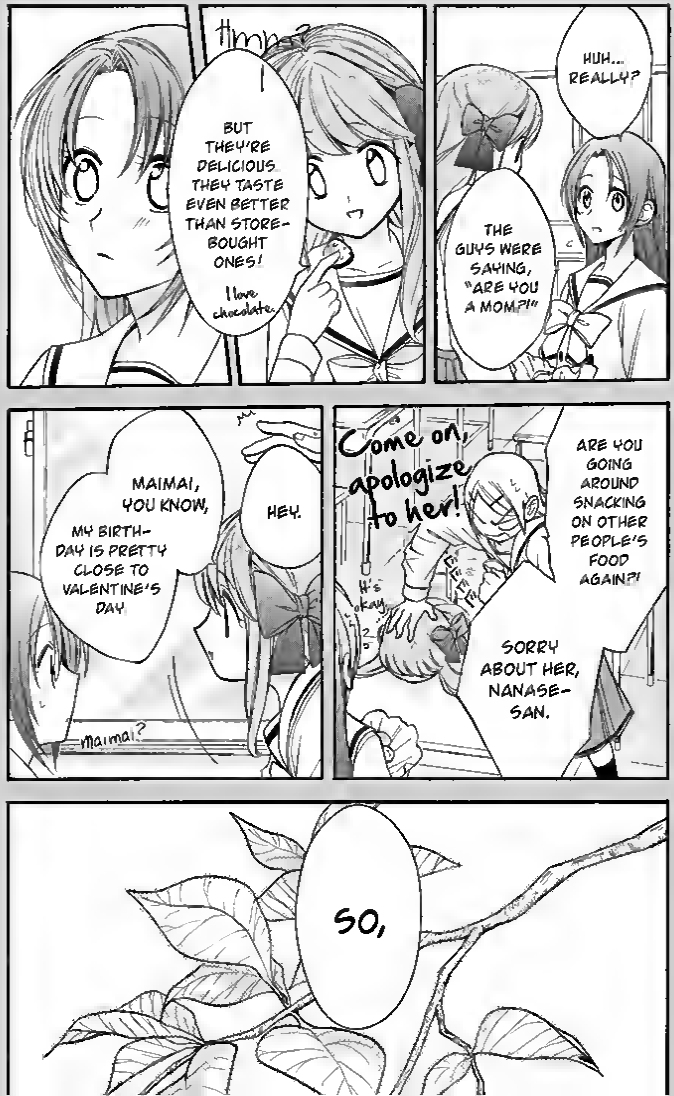
HUH?
YOU DON'T WANT HER TO BECOME A STRANGER?
What's that supposed to mean?
WHEN GIRLS GET INTO A RELATIONSHIP,
THEY BECOME DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
GRADUALLY, THEY CHANGE INTO THE TYPE OF PERSON THEIR BOYFRIEND LIKES
AND MAKE IT SO THAT THEY ARE THE IDEAL PERSON FOR THEIR PARTNER.


SHE'LL FEEL LIKE SHE'S ON CLOUD NINE WHEN SHE'S WITH HIM.
I still haven't done my homework!
I'm going to arrive a little late!
I'll work something out
It's okay!
SHE'LL THINK, "I DON'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE."
IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE OF THE FORMALIN IN HER SYSTEM.
YOU MEAN DOPAMINE?
BUT, ISN'T THAT PRETTY NORMAL?
You do that, as well.
YEAH.
IT'S NORMAL.
THAT'S WHY FRIENDSHIPS BETWEEN GIRLS ARE USUALLY SUPERFICIAL.
That's pretty deep...


SORRY!
WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER SINCE WE WERE LITTLE, SO YOU KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH ME, RIGHT?
THAT'S WHY I'M FINE MAKING ANY LAST-MINUTE CHANGES WITH YOU.
YOU LITTLE BITCH!
I'M NOT FINE, THOUGH.
YOU KNOW, I ONLY DO LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATIONS TO YOU.
I'VE NEVER DONE IT TO MAIMAI.
COME AGAIN?
I'VE ONLY KNOWN MAIMAI SINCE WE STARTED HIGH SCHOOL.
...BUT,
WE'RE NOT VERY CLOSE FRIENDS YET.
EVEN IF I WANT TO GET TO KNOW HER BETTER,

IF SHE BECOMES A DIFFERENT PERSON,
IT'LL BE LIKE WE WERE NEVER FRIENDS TO BEGIN WITH.
MAIMAI SEEMS LIKE THE TYPE OF GIRL WHO'S DEVOTED TO HER BOY-FRIEND.
Poof
SHE WON'T CARE ABOUT US ANY-MORE...
...I SEE.
I didn't think you'd be so uneasy when Mai said she got a boy-friend
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WERE SO SULLEN BACK THEN.
WELL, HERE'S WHAT I THINK—

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY SO MUCH.
SHE'S NOT THE TYPE OF GIRL WHO WOULD DO THAT—
Happy Birth day
WAH—!
THESE CHOCOLATE COOKIES TASTES GREAT!

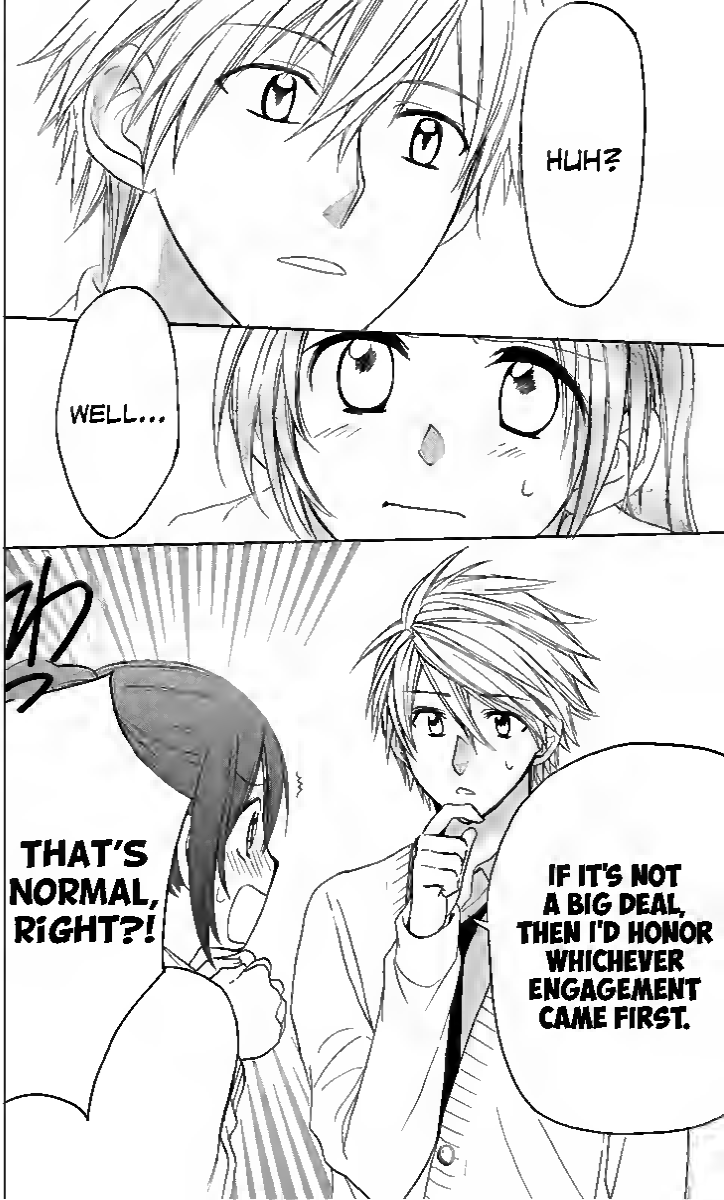

BUT THEY'RE DELICIOUS THEY TASTE EVEN BETTER THAN STORE-BOUGHT ONES!
I love chocolate.
HUH... REALLY?
THE GUYS WERE SAYING, "ARE YOU A MOM?!"
HEY.
MAIMAI, YOU KNOW, MY BIRTH-DAY IS PRETTY CLOSE TO VALENTINE'S DAY
maimai?
Come on, apologize to her!
ARE YOU GOING AROUND SNACKING ON OTHER PEOPLE'S FOOD AGAIN?!
SORRY ABOUT HER, NANASE-SAN.
SO,

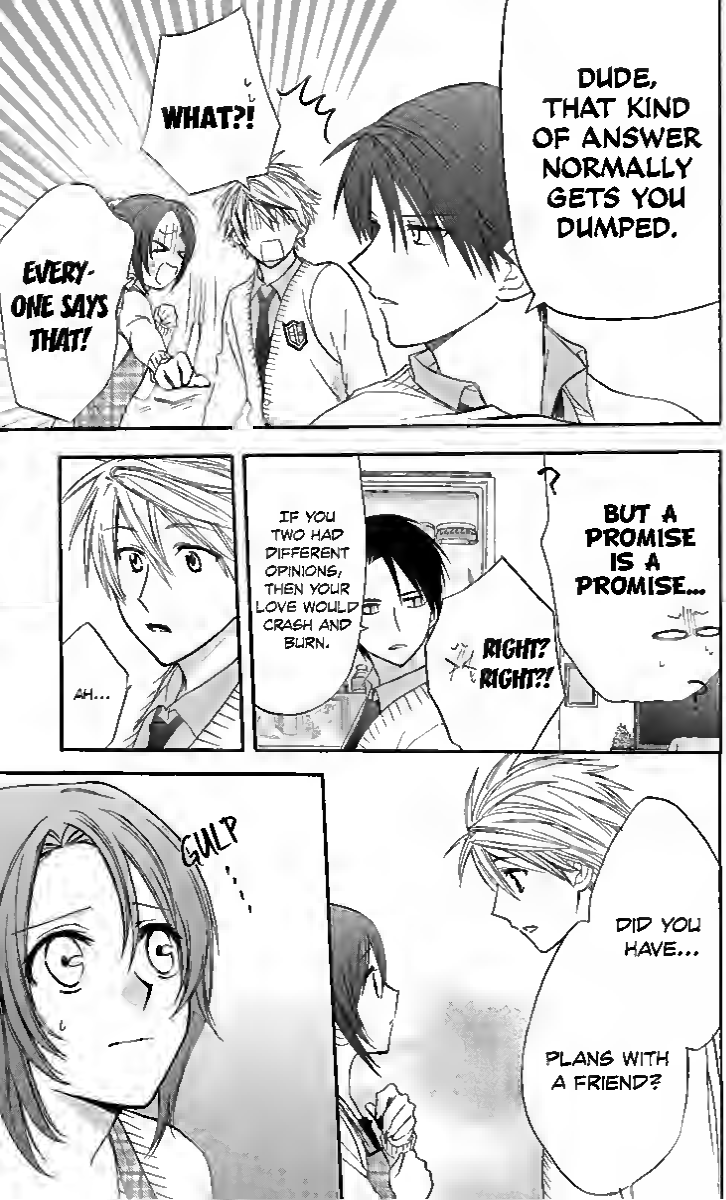
Happy Birth
FOR THAT,
CAN YOU BAKE A REALLY BIG CHOCOLATE CAKE FOR ME?
NEXT YEAR, LET'S CELEBRATE IT ON VALENTINE'S DAY!

NANASE-SAN?

AH...
WHAT'S WRONG?

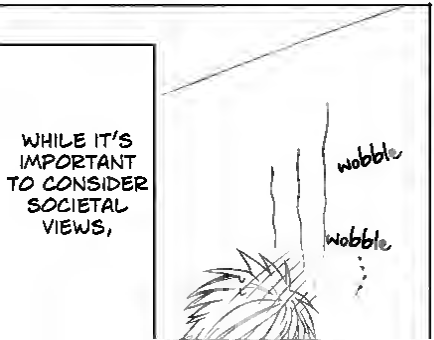
UH...
UM!
If-
IF A PROMISE WITH A FRIEND CLASHED WITH A DATE WITH ME,
WHICH WOULD TAKE PRECEDENCE FOR YOU, NISHINO-SAN?!

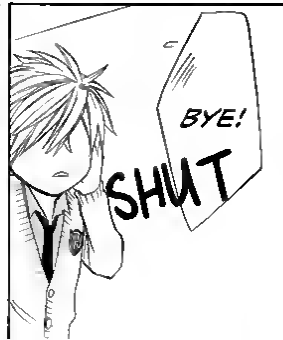

HUH?
WELL...
IF IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL, THEN I'D HONOR WHICHEVER ENGAGEMENT CAME FIRST.
THAT'S NORMAL, RIGHT?!


DUDE, THAT KIND OF ANSWER NORMALLY GETS YOU DUMPED.
WHAT?!
EVERY-ONE SAYS THAT!
BUT A PROMISE IS A PROMISE...
RIGHT? RIGHT?!
IF YOU TWO HAD DIFFERENT OPINIONS, THEN YOUR LOVE WOULD CRASH AND BURN.
AH...
DID YOU HAVE...
PLANS WITH A FRIEND?
GULP

IT'S FINE, GO AHEAD.
PAT
OKAY!
WE HAD THE SAME OPINION BY CHANCE,
BUT I'M GLAD THAT HE'S MY PARTNER.
UM...
IS THERE SOME—

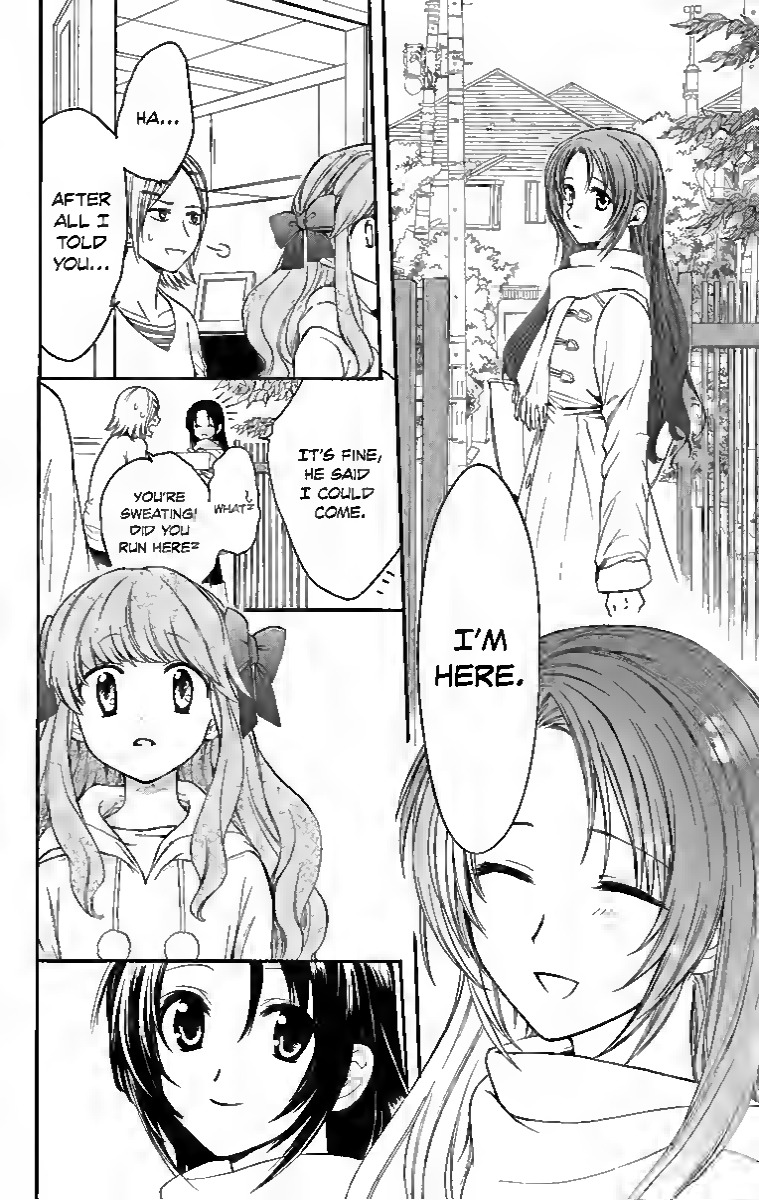
I'll...
DEFINITELY...
MAKE IT UP TO YOU...

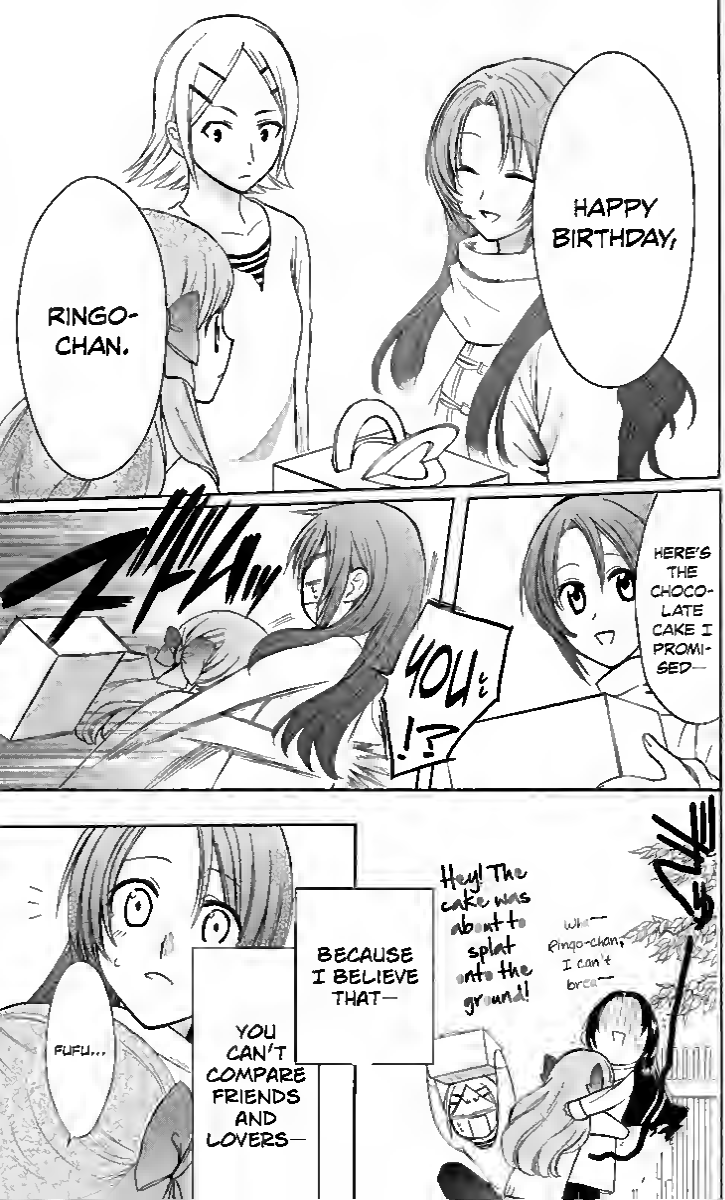

WHILE IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER SOCIETAL VIEWS,
wobble
wobble


BYE!
SHUT

WE CAN DO THINGS OUR WAY, AS WELL.
THAT GIRL
IS STRANGELY INFLEXIBLE. AND, SHE'S A LITTLE DUMB.
I DON'T THINK SHE'LL CHANGE VERY EASILY.
BUT, KEEP AVOIDING HER LIKE THAT, AND YOU'LL REALLY START TO DRIFT APART!
TAKE THIS! IT'S NO CAKE, BUT EAT IT AND CHEER UP!
!
YOU WERE MAKING THE CHOCOLATES FOR ME!
キラ
キラ

DIGGING IN!
NOM
Hmm
MAIMAI'S ONES TASTE BETTER.
YOU SHIT OF A BITCH!
GIVE THEM BACK IF YOU DON'T WANT THEM!
I NEVER SAID I DIDN'T WANT THEM!
DING
DONG
Maimai
I made the cake.
MAIMAI?


HA...
AFTER ALL I TOLD YOU...
IT'S FINE, HE SAID I COULD COME.
WHAT?
YOU'RE SWEATING! DID YOU RUN HERE?
I'M HERE.


HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
RINGO-CHAN.
HERE'S THE CHOCO-LATE CAKE I PROMI-SED—
YOU;!?
Hey! The cake was about to splat into the ground!
Wh— Ringo-chan, I can't brea—
BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT—
YOU CAN'T COMPARE FRIENDS AND LOVERS—
FUFU...

THANK YOU!
I'LL DO MY BEST
TO TREASURE THEM BOTH.
Ah.
Is the cake all right?
You're the one who made her drop it!
It's a chocolate gateau, so I think it's fine.

VALENTINE'S DAY EVER.
THIS WAS THE BEST
HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA SIT THERE FOR?
兄友2 おわり

Thank you for reading volume 2 of Anitomo!

A special mention to the following who supported me:

- My dear supervisor
- Izumi-sama
- Monk
- friend K
- friend A
- family

It was easy to tell.
BEFORE DATING MAI.
WHAT TYPE OF GIRL I LIKE?
HMM... GIRLS WITH LONG HAIR... AND OLDER THAN ME?
AFTER HE STARTED DATING MAI.
WHAT TYPE OF GIRL I LIKE?
IT FEELS AWKWARD TO ANSWER BUT UH GIRLS WITH LONG HAIR...
A GIRL WHO'S STRAIGHT FORWARD AND HAS SOME SHORTCOMINGS BUT THEY'RE WHAT MAKE HER CUTE.
AND UM MATURE AND FAMILY ORIENTED...
HUH? OLDER THAN ME? THAT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER...
HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS? A BIT LIKE A HELICOPTER MOM, LIKE A STAIN YOU CAN'T GET OFF YOUR CLOTHES.
I'M AN S-SAKU-MA?!
I'M AN IDIOT!
I SHOULD HAVE NOTICED!